

somewhat justified in requiring the same behavior from our poorer neighbors; but if not, we should surely consider a little whether among the various forms of the oppression of the poor, we may not rank as one of the first and likeliest—the oppression of expecting too much from them.

#### THE COAL STRIKE A PHASE OF THE LAND QUESTION.

A circular now being distributed in New York.

The coal strike is but another phase of the land question. If it were possible for all coal miners to take up as much of the idle coal lands as they could work, it would be impossible for the rapacious mining companies to get them to work for the miserable pittance against which they are now striking. And why should they not be allowed to take up the unused coal lands? Is there any good moral reason why any man should not have at least as much right to stake out a claim on unused coal lands as he now has on a newly discovered goldfield? No! But in answer to this question we are told that somebody owns the coal lands, and has a sign up: "No Trespassing." Somebody has bought the land from someone that bought it before, and the title to it can be tracked back to a grant from a foreign king, or to a grab from an Indian tribe. By the common consent of mankind, based upon the sanction of a system that has long since outgrown its usefulness, this kind of a title to land is respected and defended by the people.

In these days of tremendous mechanical energy, the values that attach to land in cities or mining districts rapidly overtake the amount of taxes that the community exacts from the owners. Consequently there is an incentive for man to accumulate much more land than he can use with a view of selling out later at a profit. This is why more than ten times the area of coal lands is owned than is operated.

In thus keeping the miners off the unused lands, the owners are driving them into the clutches of the oppressive companies who are now standing behind the military power of the state and saying that they have "nothing to arbitrate." And why should they arbitrate? They have the legal and moral right to go into the labor market and hire workmen at the lowest rates, just the same as they buy their machinery and supplies at the lowest prices.

As long as the people will allow their lands to be held without exacting a fair rental from the holders, they can expect no other conditions than have

been prevailing for many years in the coal fields.

Let the people apply the remedy by levying a tax on land values (irrespective of improvements) and the companies would soon be bidding against each other to get miners to work for them at wages that would be at least as high as what they could earn by forming their own companies and working the idle lands. In other words, let the people enact a law known as the "Single Tax," that would say to the owners: "Yes, you may keep all the land you wish—use it or not—but you must pay into the common treasury that sum per year which would be offered by anybody that wanted to work that land." It would then at once become a question as to whether the companies should work all their lands or give them up to cooperative companies formed of miners out of work. In either case strikes would cease, wages would be high and price of coal would be low.

#### A PROPHECY AS TO THE FUTURE OF AMERICA.

In the midst of so many college and university addresses at the present time, it is well to read and deeply consider an address that was delivered at the formal opening of the Johns Hopkins university at Baltimore September 12, 1876, by Prof. Thomas H. Huxley, on his first visit to this country. The following are the concluding chapters of it:

I constantly hear Americans speak of the charm which our old mother country has for them, of the delight with which they wander through the streets of ancient towns, or climb the battlements of mediæval strongholds, the names of which are indissolubly associated with the great epochs of that noble literature which is our common inheritance; or with the blood-stained steps of that secular progress, by which the descendants of the savage Britons and of the wild pirates of the North sea have become converted into warriors of order and champions of peaceful freedom, exhausting what still remains of the old Berserker spirit in subduing nature, and turning the wilderness into a garden. But anticipation has no less charm than retrospect, and to an Englishman landing upon our shores for the first time, traveling for hundreds of miles through strings of great and well-ordered cities, seeing your enormous actual and almost infinite potential wealth in all commodities and in the energy and ability which turn wealth to account, there is something sublime in the vista of the future. Do not suppose that I am pandering to what is commonly understood by national pride. I cannot say that I am in the slightest degree impressed by your bigness, or your natural resources, as such. Size is not grandeur, and territory does not make a nation. The great issue, about which hangs a true sublimity, and the terror of overhanging fate is what you are going to do with all these things.

What is to be the end to which these are to be the means? You are making a novel experiment in politics on the greatest scale which the world has yet seen. Forty millions at your first centenary, it is reasonably to be expected that, at the second, these states will be occupied by two hundred millions of English-speaking people, spread over an area as large as that of Europe, and with climates and interests as diverse as those of Spain and Scandinavia, England and Russia.

You and your descendants have to ascertain whether this great mass will hold together under the forms of a republic, and the despotic reality of universal suffrage; whether state rights will hold out against centralization, without separation; whether centralization will get the better, without actual or disguised monarchy; whether shifting corruption is better than a permanent bureaucracy; and as population thickens in your great cities, and the pressure of want is felt, the gaunt specter of pauperism will stalk among you, and communism and socialism will claim to be heard. Truly America has a great future before her. Great in toil, in care, and in responsibility; great in true glory if she be guided in wisdom, and righteousness; great in shame if she fail. I cannot understand why other nations should envy you, or be blind to the fact that it is for the highest interests of mankind that you should succeed; but the only one condition of success, your sole safeguard, is the moral worth and intellectual clearness of the individual citizen. Education cannot give these, but it may cherish them and bring them to the front in whatever station of society they are to be found; and the universities ought to be, and may be, the fortresses of the higher life of the nation.

May the university which commences its practical activity to-morrow, abundantly fulfil its high purpose; may its renown as a seat of true learning, a center of free inquiry, a focus of intellectual light, increase year by year, until men wander hither from all parts of the earth, as of old they sought Bologna or Paris or Oxford, and it is pleasant to me to fancy that, among the English students who may be drawn to you at that time, there may linger a dim tradition that a countryman of theirs was permitted to address you as he has done to-day, and to feel as if your hopes were his hopes and your success his joy.—Science and Education Essays, pages 259, 260 and 261.

—Correspondence of Brookline (Mass.) Chronicle.

#### GIVE JUSTICE RATHER THAN CHARITY.

Less charity would be needed in this world if more justice was dispensed. Fairness, impartiality, absolute honesty in dealing with one's fellows, these are more to be desired than benevolence.

If the employer would pay fair wages there would be no demand for free hospitals and free soup kitchens.

If we sent less rum to dark-skinned savages we need send fewer missionaries.

If we paid wage-earning women a fair recompense for their work we need not have work girls' lunch-

rooms, social settlement classes, nor free fresh air homes.

If we provided a good home for every foundling we need not give the waifs a Thanksgiving dinner.

If we had an equal standard of chastity for men and women we would not need to spend money on refuges for deserted, erring women.

If England had not taxed India to the starving point the whole Christian world would not now need to send their gold to purchase the food in English storehouses to feed the perishing millions.

If women had the ballot they could afford to pick up their own pocket handkerchiefs.

Give justice rather than charity.—Catharine Waugh McCullough, in Chicago Tribune.

#### THE MENACE OF PLUTOCRACY.

An extract from an address delivered by the late Thomas G. Shearman at Portland, Ore., June 17, 1889. This address, just as it was taken down by the stenographer at the time, was reproduced in the September (1900) number of "Why?", an excellent little periodical published by Frank Vierth at Cedar Rapids, Ia. As the editor of "Why?" says: "The lapse of nearly 12 years gives the speech added interest and significance."

Some cause has been at work during the last 25 or 30 years, which has resulted in a tremendous widening of the social chasm between the rich and poor. Some cause has, within the recollection probably of the majority of those who are present, entirely transformed the face of American society. Our old equality is gone. So far from being the most equal people on the face of the earth, as we once boasted that we were, ours is the most unequal of civilized nations. You talk about wealth of the British aristocracy, and about the poverty of the British poor. There is not in the whole of Great Britain and Ireland so striking a contrast, so wide a chasm between the rich and the poor, as there is in these United States of America. There is no man in the whole of Great Britain and Ireland who is as wealthy as one of some half a dozen gentlemen who could be named in this country; and there are few there who are poorer than some who could be found in this country. It is true, I think, even yet, that there is a larger number of the extremely poor in Great Britain and Ireland than there is in this country. How long that will remain true it is difficult to say; but it is unquestionably not true that there is any greater mass of riches concentrated in a few hands in any country than in this.

Whereas, 40 years ago a man worth

\$100,000 was, even in our great city of New York, an object of remark and envy, such a man is now utterly obscure and unnoticed, and is considered to have laid merely the beginnings of a very moderate part of the capital which would be necessary for him to make a living.

Whereas, 40 years ago, there was but one man in the United States who was supposed to be worth more than \$5,000,000, there are several Astors now, each of whom is generally reputed to be worth at least \$50,000,000. There are probably ten times as many men to-day who are worth \$20,000,000 as there were 40 years ago who were worth \$1,000,000; and there are now several men who are worth over \$100,000,000 each.

This state of things is developing more and more rapidly. In every corner are men and women buried in obscurity, until we learn by some accident that they are worth their \$10,000,000 or \$20,000,000. A single member of a banking firm in the city of Philadelphia lately died, leaving more than \$21,000,000. There are at least four surviving partners in that firm having equal shares with the deceased. Two Philadelphians, of no public fame, recently died, having \$22,000,000 each. One lady in my own city of Brooklyn is worth certainly not less than \$30,000,000. We see evidences of this enormous accumulation on every side. And it can be demonstrated with great ease by statistics which are undisputed, that at the present day less than 100,000 persons, constituting as a matter of fact only about one two-hundredth part of our working force, are possessed of incomes which enable them to save about three-fifths of all the wealth that is annually saved in this country. And as wealth is substantially all reproduced within less than 30 years, this means that within 30 years 100,000 persons are destined to own three-fifths of the entire wealth of the United States; land, houses, improvements, goods, chattels, personal property of every kind.

Everybody knows that this state of things is undesirable. This enormous amount of wealth concentrated in a few hands brings to them no particular pleasure, no additional comforts, certainly does not bring to them anything like proportionate happiness.

Those of you who are in tolerably good circumstances, who can see your way to earn your living comfortably and peaceably through life without special anxiety, may well thank God that you are not so rich as these rich men. For, with a somewhat extended

experience among them, I have yet to find the first man who was one particle happier—I make no reference to his being better, but who was one particle happier—for being in possession of more than or even as much as \$1,000,000.

But what is the result of this state of things upon the community at large? You all know that there is widespread discontent among the poor who are deprived of the pleasures which they see the rich enjoy. You all know that, while it is easy to cast reproaches upon those who call attention to these facts, by accusing them of exciting popular discontent, the public discontent is already excited—is already universal. You have seen for 15 years at least a continual seething tide of discontent rise and dash itself against the barriers on every side; sometimes shown by the granger movements; sometimes by the farmers, by the miners, by the manufacturing workmen, by the laboring classes generally. In one form or another this surging roar of discontent is continually heard. I am no such alarmist as are many gentlemen whom I have heard, distinguished in public affairs, whose names I would not venture to use. I have heard in every quarter, and from wealthy men, from men who do not believe in popular government, the gravest expression of alarm, and the gravest fears for the future, expressed in every direction. In all parts of the country rich men are putting their heads together and whispering: "What are we to do about popular suffrage? What will become of our property if we allow universal suffrage to go on? Can this government last under such an arrangement?" And they whisper to each other: "It cannot."

Now I have a different opinion; and still, my opinion is not very much more favorable upon the whole to the future, than theirs. I do not believe they will ever abolish popular suffrage; but this I do predict, without fear that the future will falsify it, that if this state of things continues unchanged for 30 years, or at the most, 50 years more, while you will retain the form and shell of popular government, you will in reality be subject to an absolute plutocracy. There will be possibly 20,000,000 or 25,000,000 votes cast; and so long as a plutocracy can manage that of the 25,000,000 votes cast, 12,600,000 shall be cast on their side, they will count the remaining 12,400,000; but the moment there is a change, and the men who control, as they will control at that time, from two-thirds to